

# Arts in the Parks

## McCormick's Creek State Park

**Website:** <http://www.in.gov/dnr/parklake/2978.htm>

### Key Messages/Stories:

- As Indiana's first state park, McCormick's Creek embodies our cultural history of parks as well as a stunning display of geographical history. The falls, the canyon, the inn, nature center and hiking trails have been a favorite of visitors since 1916.
- Cultural History of the Area – John McCormick homesteaded nearly one hundred acres near the canyon, and his sons attempted to operate a saw mill on the creek circa 1816. Early settlers cut timber, grazed livestock and farmed patches of flat land. Thick limestone near the White River provided stone for the base of the Indianapolis State House, ultimately providing the park with an old abandoned quarry that today is a favorite hiking destination. The scenic falls and beautiful landscape prompted an Indianapolis doctor to establish a sanitarium nearby for rest and relaxation, which later became the first state park inn in Indiana, now known as the Canyon Inn. The sale of the land and sanitarium were the basis for the start of our park system.
- Natural beauty – Scenic beauty and rich natural heritage are found at McCormick's Creek. The park contains two nature preserves. Hiking trails take visitors past varied habitats of deep woods, reeks, old farm fields, ridges, bottom lands, caves and ravines. Wildlife abounds throughout the park.

### Top Five Things to Do:

- Visit the falls and hike the trail 3 loop.
- Hike to Wolf Cave.
- Tour the nature center and attend a program.
- Spend the night at the Canyon Inn or just enjoy a warm meal in the restaurant while watching wildlife from the enclosed porch.
- Explore the Historic Stone Arch Bridge built by the Civilian Conservation Corps.

**Lodging:** Canyon Inn, family cabins, group camps and camping.

**General visitor profile:** campers (weekends or weeklong); day-users for picnics and hiking; visiting the nature center; school groups in spring/summer; scout and other groups for volunteer service; groups in the group camps; families in the family cabins; people staying in the Canyon Inn.

### Potential arts venues:

- Large historic limestone amphitheater that seats 500 people. Outdoor setting (no cover), with stage and rustic cabin structure on stage that provides lighting and electricity.
- Various shelter houses:
  - CCC Recreation Building: Fully enclosed, capacity 75, electricity, full kitchen, single bathroom
  - Deer Run Shelter: Open shelter, capacity inside 50, electricity
  - Echo Shelter: Open shelter, capacity inside 50, electricity



- Friendly Shelter: Fully enclosed, capacity 75, electricity, full kitchen, single bathroom
  - Hillcrest Shelter: Fully enclosed, capacity 50, electricity, full kitchen, no bathroom
  - Pine Bluff Shelter: Open shelter, capacity inside 50, electricity
  - Red Bud Shelter: Fully enclosed, capacity 100, electricity
- Nature Center:
    - Program room: Inside the nature center, capacity 60. Projector available, inside workspace for small workshop type arts.
    - Outdoor amphitheater: wooden bench seating, capacity 75. Wooden elevated stage with one electric outlet, lighting, screen for projector.

**Visitation in FY2014:** 558,555

**Nearby Communities:** Spencer, Ellettsville, Bloomington

**Please email questions to [Artsintheparks@dnr.IN.gov](mailto:Artsintheparks@dnr.IN.gov).**

